

The COACH Template

Introduction:

The third and fourth *Conferences on Legal Information: Scholarship and Teaching* brought together legal research professionals at Earle Mack School of Law, Drexel University on July 21-23, 2011 and at Harvard Law School on July 19-21, 2012. The purposes of the Conferences were to continue to foster legal information scholarship and to continue to develop the signature pedagogy for legal research education, in accord with the 2009 Boulder Statement on Legal Research Education (available at https://lawlibrary.colorado.edu/node/960/Conference_on_Legal_Information_COACH_Template.pdf.)

Participants at the 2011 and 2012 Conferences created the COACH template - a template that serves as a framework for legal research activity/lesson planning. Using the theoretical foundations of the signature pedagogy, they constructed the template with the understanding that having a clear vision of objectives and outcomes will result in more freedom in teaching. The participants also created four actual classroom teaching exemplars, using the COACH template as a guide.

The COACH template divides each activity/lesson plan into three areas for consideration: **C**ontext and **O**bjectives; **A**ctivity; and **C**hecklists for teacher notes and reflections. These areas for consideration are meant to provide guidelines and suggestions and aid teachers in changing their instructional approaches based on the signature pedagogy.

I. Contexts & Objectives:

A. What does instructor want them to learn? (objectives/outcomes)

B. Why does instructor want them to learn it?

Building towards a specific, larger or higher-level skill.
Why does anybody care about this specific objective?

C. How will instructor know if they have learned it? (what assessment methods will be used to determine if they have learned it?)

- i. For this particular class
- ii. Building towards a specific, larger skill
- iii. Type of assessment (instructor-assessed, peer-assessed, rubrics, formative, summative)

D. When will this be introduced?

Skill/Knowledge Level:

Appropriate for 1L course, after lecture(s) and/or reading?

Prior experience with these materials or types of problems?

2L?

Substantive course?

Framework /what students need to have learned to this point

E. How will the students learn it? (discussion, problem, etc.)

i. Context [Doctrine, topic, type of research (contracts, or statutes, or a specific skill, for example)].

ii. Resources/materials needed

iii. Student Activities (the process for arriving at the product):

Problems, assignments, negotiations

a. Before class

b. During class

c. After class

iv. Legal Information Environment (where is student situated):

Resources available; legal work environment; workplace setting; constraints (time, cost, restrictions on use of resources).

v. Student Work Product(s):

e.g., written memo, verbal report, client communication, research plan, completed assignment/answer, presentation (with or without software).

II. The Activity:

The activity (problem/assignment; scenario as needed) as it is presented to students, with instructions.

Narrative on how problem is presented and how exercise is run.

Considering/anticipating/planning for what might or should go wrong; contingency planning

Are there charts or illustrations? Handouts?

What is the problem type? See Callister's Adapted Bloom's Taxonomy

III. Checklists: Teacher's Notes and Reflections:

A. Checklist of Boulder Statement Pedagogical Principles Implicated

B. Does this lesson provide an opportunity for:

- a. Iterative and analytical process
- b. Identification of significant facts
- c. Determination of legal issues and problems
- d. Location, evaluation and manipulation of research authorities
- e. Understanding of legal system in which question arises
- f. Evaluation of available legal resources
- g. Synthesis of information about legal system and resources to identify research plan
- h. Continual re-evaluation of progress and results
- i. Application of professional and ethical norms implicated by research
- j. Ongoing examination of professional standards, including ethical responsibilities
- k. Fulfillment of ethical duty to conduct adequate and thorough research

C. Does this lesson/course :

- Use a range of teaching methodologies
- Use a mix of realistic problem types
- Show relationship of legal structure to legal tools
- Allow students to evaluate the appropriate use of the tools
- provide opportunity to model professional duties and obligations

IV. Examples

- A. [Illustration I - Research Plan](#) (state regulations and case law) [pdf]
- B. [Illustration II -Federal Statutes](#) [pdf]
- C. [Illustration III – Problem Types](#) [pdf]
- D. [Illustration IV – Regulatory Activity](#) [pdf]

Boulder Conference Signatories

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